

# Time in Epicurus, Lucretius, and Aristotle

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## [Physics by Aristotle](#)

I just came across this mention of Aristotle's ideas on time in Physics 4:10-14 and thought I saw some parallels with Epicurus and Lucretius. Or, if not parallels, Aristotle providing a jumping off point for an Epicurean rebuttal.

For example, Epicurus in the *Herodotus*:

### Quote

[72] "There is another thing which we must consider carefully. We must not investigate time as we do the other accidents which we investigate in a subject, namely, by referring them to the preconceptions envisaged in our minds ; but we must take into account the plain fact itself, in virtue of which we speak of time as long or short, linking to it in intimate connexion this attribute of duration.<sup>106</sup>We need not adopt any fresh terms as preferable, but should employ the usual expressions about it. Nor need we predicate anything else of time, as if this something else contained the same essence as is contained in the proper meaning of the word `time' (for this also is done by some). We must chiefly reflect upon that to which we attach this peculiar character of time, and by which we measure it. [73] No further proof is required : we have only to reflect that we attach the attribute of time to days and nights and their parts, and likewise to feelings of pleasure and pain and to neutral states, to states of movement and states of rest, conceiving a peculiar accident of these to be this very characteristic which we express by the word `time.' [He says this both in the second book "On Nature" and in the Larger Epitome.]

Both Epicurus and Aristotle talk about time in relation to motion.

Do I remember that Lucretius discussed time somewhere?

Anyway, food for thought.